

**REMARKS****Status of the Claims**

Claims 1-3, 6-10, 12-16, and 18-25 are currently present in the Application, and claims 1, 9, 15, and 21-25 are independent claims. Claims 2, 10, 16, 21, and 23-24 have been amended, no claims have been canceled, and no claims have been added.

Applicants are not conceding that the subject matter encompassed by claims 1-25, prior to this and previous amendments are not patentable over the art cited by the Examiner. Claims 2, 10, 16, 21, and 23-24 were amended in this Amendment solely to facilitate expeditious prosecution of this Application. Applicants respectfully reserve the right to pursue claims, including the subject matter encompassed by claims 1-25 as presented prior to this and previous amendments, and additional claims in one or more continuing applications.

**Examiner Interview**

Applicants note with appreciation the telephonic interview conducted between Applicants' representative, the Examiner, and the Examiner's Supervisor on September 17, 2008. During the telephonic interview, the Examiner agreed that the 112 rejection to claim 1 will be withdrawn since it includes proper Markush claiming language. Regarding the 112 rejection to claim 2, Applicants' representative stated that claim 2 (and similar claims) would be amended accordingly in order to correct antecedent basis issues. In addition, Applicants' representative discussed that Applicants' claim 1 includes a limitation for receiving a rule sentence from a user that was modified by the user. In contrast, Gross (U.S. 5,283,856) teaches sending messages to users based upon a rule sentence (e.g., "Out of the Office"), but never teaches or suggests forwarding the actual rule to other users. The Examiner agreed that Applicants' claim 1 may read over Gross but wished to review Gross in more detail. Applicants note that if new art is discovered in a subsequent search and used to reject Applicants' claims, Applicants should receive another non-final Office Action due to the fact that Applicants have not amended Applicants' independent claims in this response.

**Claim Objections Under 35 U.S.C. § 112**

Claims 1-3, 6-10, 12-16, and 18-25 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which Applicants regard as their invention. As agreed upon in the Examiner interview claims 1, 9, 15, and 21-25 include proper Markush claiming language and the 112 rejection to these claims will be withdrawn. In addition, Applicants have amended claims 2, 10, 16, 21, and 23-24 to correct antecedent basis issues in this response. Therefore Applicants request removal of the 112 rejection to claims 1-3, 6-10, 12-16, and 18-25 in the next Office communication.

**Claim Rejections - Alleged Anticipation Under 35 U.S.C. § 102**

Claims 1-3, 6-10, 12-16, and 18-25 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Gross et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,283,856, hereinafter "Gross"). Applicants respectfully traverse these rejections.

Claim 1 is a method claim with limitations comprising:

- receiving presentation content from an initiating client;
- identifying a plurality of users for which to utilize the presentation content;
- distributing the presentation content to the identified plurality of users;
- after distributing the presentation content, receiving a first message from one of the plurality of users that includes a rule, the first message associated with the distributed presentation content but sent separately from the distributed presentation content, wherein the rule includes a **rule sentence that is selected from the group consisting of a job description and an expertise**;
- identifying a subset of the plurality of users that correspond to the rule;
- forwarding the first message and the rule to the identified subset of users;

- receiving a second message and a modification of the forwarded rule from one of the identified users, wherein the modified forwarded rule includes a **different rule sentence that is selected from the group consisting of a different job description and a different expertise**;
- identifying one or more subsequent users that correspond to the modified forwarded rule; and
- sending the second message and the modified forwarded rule to the one or more subsequent users that correspond to the modified forwarded rule.

Applicants receive presentation content from a presenter and distribute the presentation content to a plurality of users, such as for a collaborative discussion. In turn, Applicants receive a message pertaining to the presentation content from one of the plurality of users that includes a rule. For example, a user may have a question regarding one of the slides included in the presentation.

Applicants forward the message to a subset of recipient users that meet the rule, and allow the recipient users to modify the rule and send a subsequent message using the modified rule. For example, an original rule may specify a particular job description in which to send a question, such as a "software engineer," and a recipient user may change the job description to "computer programmer." The Office Action points to an excerpt in Gross to reject Applicants' "rule modification" limitation. However, after further review, Gross discloses replying to a message using a rule sentence, but does not disclose forwarding the rule. Gross states:

"When the user selects "out of the office," an interface prompts the user for information including an indication of an "until date"...The user can specify a source of messages which will invoke the out of the office rule(s) and can indicate **a message that should be transmitted** in response to messages from the specified source(s)." (col. 10, lines 33-41, emphasis added)

As can be seen from the above excerpt, Gross sends a message in response to a rule sentence being true, such as "If message received, send reply X." Gross never teaches or suggests, however forwarding the rule. Therefore, Gross never teaches or suggests "*receiving a second message and a **modification of the forwarded rule** from*

one of the identified users” as claimed by Applicants. The Office Action suggests that since Gross allows a user to forward a message and change the email recipient, Gross teaches the modification of a rule. However, Applicants further describe Applicants’ modified forwarded rule as “*wherein the modified forwarded rule **includes a different rule sentence that is selected from the group consisting of a different job description and a different expertise,***” which is different than merely changing an email recipient address as taught by Gross.

Therefore, since Gross does not teach or suggest, either in whole or in part, all the limitations included in Applicants’ claim 1 as amended, amended claim 1 is allowable over Gross. Claims 9 and 23 are information handling system claims including similar limitations as claim 1 and, therefore, are allowable for at least the same reasons that claim 1 is allowable. Claims 15 and 24-25 are computer program product claims including similar limitations as claim 1 and, therefore, are allowable for at least the same reasons that claim 1 is allowable. Claims 21-22 are method claims including similar limitations as claim 1 and, therefore, are allowable for at least the same reasons that claim 1 is allowable.

Each of claims 2-3, 6-8, 10, 12-14, 16, and 18-20 depend, either directly or indirectly, upon one of the allowable independent claims 1, 9, or 15. Therefore, each of claims 2-3, 6-8, 10, 12-14, 16, and 18-20 are allowable for at least the same reasons that their respective independent claims are allowable.

### **Conclusion**

As a result of the foregoing, it is asserted by Applicants that the remaining claims in the Application are in condition for allowance, and Applicants respectfully request an early allowance of such claims.

Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner contact the Applicants' attorney listed below if the Examiner believes that such a discussion would be helpful in resolving any remaining questions or issues related to this Application.

Respectfully submitted,

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